

The Eyes of Our Firefighters

By Jeff Ware, Public Outreach/ Urban Coordinator/ Northeast District

Driving into the office, I always notice if the flags are up or down. If they're up, I know Joe Perry is around the office. Joe is about as patriotic as they come. I guess he got that way from having served his country in the Air Force. (Or maybe he served in the Air Force because he is that patriotic!)

Joe was born and raised in Rienzi, Mississippi. He and his wife, Mrs. P., still live there, along with their three Maltese puppies.

Joe graduated from high school and, at the age of 17, joined the Air Force. He enjoyed his stint in the Air Force, and during that time, he traveled to London, parts of Italy, and other corners of the world. Joe said he'd always dreamed of flying airplanes, but said with a laugh that he didn't fly a plane even one single time while in the Air Force.

After serving four years in the Air Force and receiving an honorable discharge, he returned home to Rienzi. Joe worked in several factories before landing a job at the Corinth Airport, where he began flying crop dusters. He laughs as he recalls one flight in particular: he was flying a duster and clipped a tree with the tip of the wing, but he kept on flying. "I flew the same field again, and this time I hit it with my landing gear, but I finished spraying the field!"

While working at the airport, he met pilot Tifnord Norman, who was at that time doing contract flights for fire control and observation for the MFC. After Mr. Norman's death in 1985, then-District Forester George

Ayers, who was aware of Joe's familiarity with the job, hired him for fire control for the agency. Joe has served as the



pilot for the Northeast District for the past 21 years, a beneficial career for Joe and his family.

Joe and his wife Barbara are members of Kemps Baptist Church. Joe enjoys sailing, playing with his three maltese puppies, eating Mrs. P's cooking, and, of course, flying. He houses his 1946 Cessna two-seat tail dragger at the Corinth Airport.

Joe has flown 12 or 13 different planes, and has spotted more insect spots and wildfires than most people see during their entire MFC careers.

You can ask any NED employee about Joe, and they respond that when there is fire on the ground and smoke is thick, 'Tupelo 25' really is the "the Eyes of our Firefighters."



Master Urban Forester volunteers



On October 5, the DeSoto County Master Urban Foresters met for their second training session. George Byrd provided a video, "The Forest Where We Live," to lay a foundation of the importance of urban forests to each of the participants. The role that volunteers can play to assist their communities, the benefits and costs of the urban forest, and the role of the MFC were discussed. Byrd touched on Tree City USA, the MUFC, funding opportunities, and how the volunteers can help the MFC fill the gaps in urban forestry education and projects. MFC employees Drew Stafford and Rick Olson will speak to the group once a week for five weeks of "hands-on" training. Each session will last four hours. The sessions include both classroom time and on-site projects.



Safety First: First Time, Every Time



Unrecognized hazards can exist anywhere.

Take a look at the truck pictured here. The driver, in an attempt at keeping it tidy, sprayed the interior of his truck and overhead console with "canned air" (used for cleaning computers and other electronic equipment), then lit a cigarette. The result was a flash fire, leaving the driver with first- and second-degree burns that sent him to the

Doctors' Hospital burn unit for four days. Fortunately for his coworkers, he was alone in the truck.

"Canned air" contains 1,1-difluoroethane. It is extremely flammable, and is an asphyxiant if inhaled in concentrations.

Use caution when using any compressed chemicals. Read contents, instructions and all warnings very carefully, and then **follow them!**

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Renewable Energy Day

On October 6, 2006, this year's Renewable Energy Day was held at the Agriculture and Forestry Museum in Jackson. This event was sponsored by the Energy Division of the Mississippi Development Authority. Other sponsors were Chevron and Entergy.

Exhibitors included the Mississippi Forestry Commission, Hinds County Soil and Water Conservation District, Mississippi Department of Transportation, Jackson State University, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Mississippi Technology Alliance, the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, Amos Energy, and Mississippi State University.

Rick Olson, MFC Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator, explains to students the "Top Ten Reasons We Need Trees" at the recent Renewable Energy Day. He was assisted by Teresa Geter.



Mentor to Tomorrow's Foresters

Rick Olson has been busy this month! Not only did he talk to students at the Renewable Energy event, he also received a request

from McLaurin Attendance Center to mentor a student interested in urban forestry. For his Senior Project, Patrick Allen will be identifying and labeling trees on a nature trail at Camp Wahi, a Girl Scout camp in Rankin County. Rick is shown here explaining to Patrick (left) the differences in leaves that can be found in woods throughout Mississippi. Patrick will also be completing a research paper on protecting trees on construction sites.

News from Around the State: **Statewide Employee News**

The NED welcomes our new employees filling the role of Forest Ranger 1:

- ♦ Martin McDaniel, Lee County
- ♦ Joshua Hatcher, Monroe County
- ♦ Timothy Hinton, Oktibbeha
- ♦ Chris Pumphrey, Lowndes County

We also welcome the return of a couple of clerks:

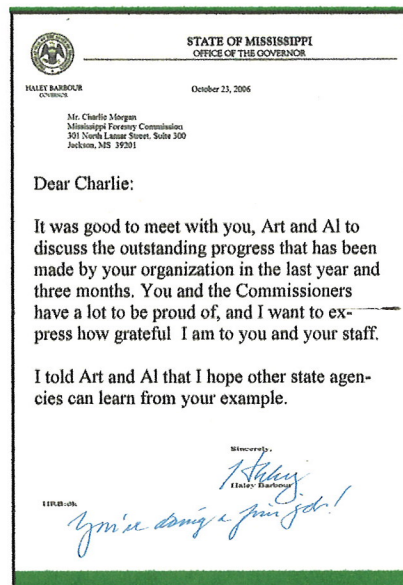
- ♦ Barbara Riddle, Prentiss County
- ♦ Dorthey Compton, Tishomingo County

The SO Accounting Office staff welcomes Teresa Geter and Eric Hambrick. Eric is in purchasing and Teresa will be helping Charlene with Accounts receivable. Charlene will transition to the Katrina Grants program.

John Moore has been named the new Philadelphia Area Forester. John was the Newton County Service Forester for the past seven years.

Hats off to Brad Pulliam, Perry County Tech III. One week after the Fire Origin Training at the Southern Regional Fire Training Center in Pearl, he was able to put his newly acquired skills to use on a fire in Greene County. Brad was able to determine the location of the fire's origin (which included multiple sets), and find and collect a number of incendiary devices. Techs at the Mississippi Crime Lab fell pretty certain they will be able to lift fingerprints from the evidence.

Next month's issue of MFC News will include photographs and more information on the training.



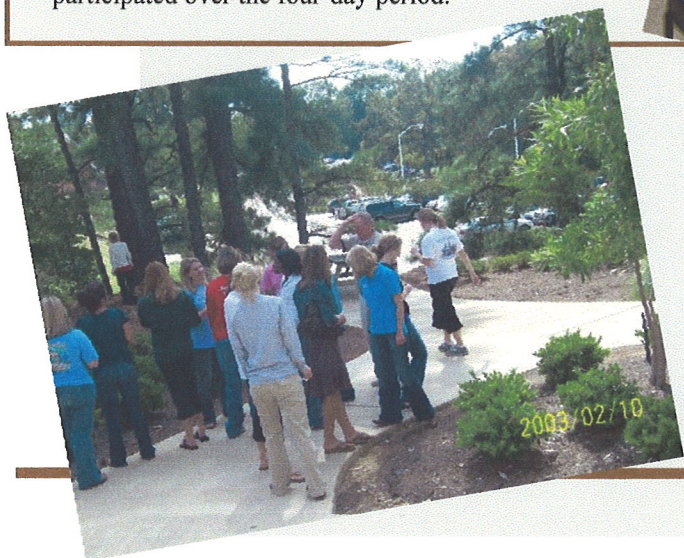
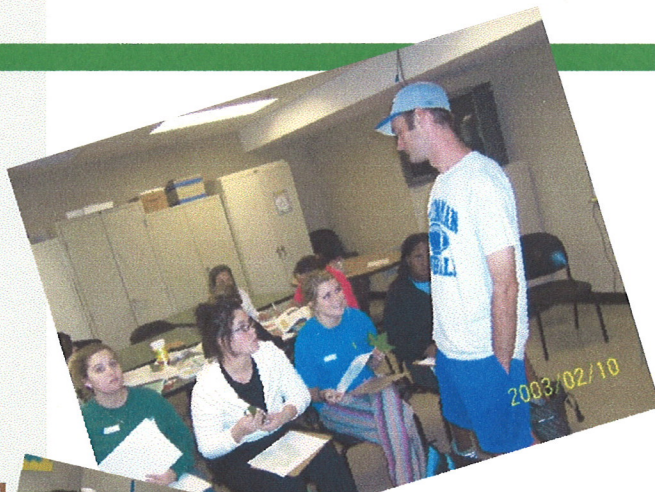
NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

All submissions are welcome. Photographs are encouraged (although space constraints may curtail inclusion). Items must be received by the 15th of the month to be included in the next month's issue.

PLT:

Plenty of Lucky college students Train in workshops

Pre-service education majors recently participated in Project Learning Tree workshops at the University of Mississippi. The workshops were held Tuesdays, October 3 and 10, and Fridays, October 6 and 13, at Guyton Hall on the campus in Oxford. Facilitators were Harold Anderson, Cliff Daniel, Wallace Johnston, Drew Stafford, and George Byrd. A little over 200 students participated over the four-day period.



Forrest/Lamar County



The Forrest/Lamar County Forestry Association held their awards meeting on October 5 in Hattiesburg. Dr. Jim Shepard (above), Head of the Department of Forestry at MSU, was the guest speaker for the approximately 80 participants present for the meeting.

The Lamar County Extension Service held its 9th Annual Fall Garden Seminar Friday, October 6, at the Lamar County Extension Center. The MFC's Jimmy Mordica gave a presentation on native Mississippi trees for landscaping to the 75 participants.